



Jubilee Fellowship members celebrate receive Blue Zones Project recognition in November.

COURTESY OF BLUE ZONES PROJECT OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

# TWO MORE IN THE ZONE

## *Jubilee Fellowship, Neighborhood Organics receive recognition*

**LIZ FREEMAN**  
LIZ.FREEMAN@NAPLESNEWS.COM;  
239-263-4778

The Rev. Dan Lamey talks about the Blue Zones Project in terms of faith, of his Jubilee Fellowship members “scattering” out in the community doing good, and everyone having purpose.

Jubilee Fellowship, which was founded in 2013 and today has 60 congregant members, recently garnered Blue Zones recognition for promoting the initiative’s principles for being healthier and gaining fulfillment.

Neighborhood Organics, a farmers market store at the Shoppes at Vanderbilt, also gained Blue Zones recognition.

To date, 35 local organizations, from businesses to residential communities, have achieved Blue Zones recognition or approval since the project was launched last year. In essence, each organization strives to fulfill a check list of best practices to make healthier options easier for its employees, members or audience to adopt.

The philosophy is that creating an atmosphere that encourages healthier

behavior will become ingrained and lead to improved health and happiness.

The Blue Zones Project is based on the world travels of Dan Buettner, who identified communities worldwide where people share lifestyle traits that promote longevity, where many in the communities live to 100 or older. He wrote a New York Times best-seller about the nine principles of longevity.

Called the “Power Nine,” the Blue Zones principles include moving naturally by being physically active, knowing your purpose in life, taking time to relax, having a healthy social network and putting loved ones first.

Other principles include participating in a religious community, limiting alcohol con-

sumption, eating a plant-slant diet and stopping to eat when you are 80 percent full.

Blue Zones project consultants work with communities to identify strengths and gaps, and offers tools and resources so employers, schools, restaurants, grocery stores and other entities can take various steps to make healthier choices easier.

At present, 31 communities in eight states have joined the project, which includes three coastal communities in California; 15 cities in Iowa; Albert Lea, Minnesota; Fort Worth, Texas; and communities in Wisconsin, Oregon and Hawaii.

Dr. Allen Weiss, chief executive officer of the NCH Healthcare System, introduced the Blue Zones Project to the community in 2014, and it was

officially launched in Collier and Lee counties last year.

NCH is underwriting the cost over eight years or longer; Weiss has declined in the past to disclose NCH’s financial investment in the project.

Jubilee Fellowship members meet at 10 a.m. Sundays for a service in the ballroom at Aston Gardens at Pelican Marsh in North Naples.

Jubilee members are embracing the principles of being socially connected and purpose by volunteering in the community and promoting healthier snacks during the Sunday services, among other things.

“It’s not just gathering, it’s about being engaged with the community as we scatter,” he said, referring to how Jubilee members volunteer.

Some members volunteer with charities or by teaching their skills, like yoga, to others

Neighborhood Organics opened as a farmers market store two years ago, and it operates a farmers market with other vendors on Saturdays, offering a range of healthier and organic foods, along with natural products of soaps and other personal care products, said Janet Blanchard, one of the founders with Laura Sloat and Jenny Breton.

The three women bring more than 20 years of combined experience in marketing and managing small businesses.

The Blue Zones project is a natural fit for Neighborhood Organics and the farmers market with the outdoor setting, walking and bringing vendors together.